

Administrator's Update for 2/1/12
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

Charlotte County was selected as one of the ten communities in the United States to receive technical assistance from the Livability Solutions organization, funded by Environmental Protection Agency Office of Sustainable Communities. The assistance will be used in the Charlotte Harbor and Parkside community redevelopment areas and will focus on the relationship of US 41 and key intersections in these communities. The goals are to improve walkability and mobility in each of these two redevelopment areas. Members of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute will be arriving in Charlotte County to review existing conditions, meet with stakeholders and host a workshop.

Sports park lighting

Our facilities and maintenance operations department started a breaker box replacement project for the sports park field lighting breakers last week and the project should be completed by the first week in February. This project was necessary to upgrade old equipment that seemed to cause several light outages last season. The old breakers were worn and often did not reset properly because they were so worn out. The new breakers will properly hold the amperage that is being drawn for the lights.

Senior services

A case management supervisor from our senior services division was contacted by the planning and evaluation unit within the State Department of Elder Affairs. Because of staff responses and comments to a recent state survey, our senior services division staff was invited to participate in the conference call with the statewide group assigned to reviewing the assessment tool used to evaluate frail seniors and their caregivers when determining prioritization for in-home elder care grant-funded services. The conference call is scheduled in February.

New parking

A representative from the Florida Department of Transportation made an onsite visit to the transit division to view the proposed extension for the parking area that houses the transit bus fleet. Issues regarding safety and security were discussed as merits for the parking lot project. The county has requested grant funding for this project.

Attracting visitors

Charlotte County tourism office staff participated in the annual Travel Expo at The Villages, just north of Tampa. Preliminary estimates indicate approximately 6,000 residents attended this consumer show hunting for ideas and information relating to vacation travel within the state. Research conducted by show organizers revealed that the majority of this affluent market takes at least two in-state vacations each year, prefers to travel mid-week, and is interested in visiting natural attractions and the beaches. Charlotte Harbor and the Gulf Islands was well represented at the show as representatives from area accommodations (Fishermen's Village, Four Points by Sheraton, Hotel Management of Port Charlotte, and Microtel Inn & Suites) participated with the our county tourism office. More than 1,200 of our Visitor's Guides were distributed and staff fielded a variety of detailed questions about our destination.